

Communications

Is anyone out there listening?

Joel McCormick, the editor-in-chief of *the georgian*, is more interested in fact than fantasy and hopes this year's newspaper will reflect that attitude.

McCormick, a twenty-one year old Arts student who has just returned from a year of travelling in Europe, was selected by a special search committee of the Students Legislative Council. The sub-committee was formed to nominate an editor for the thirty-two year old newspaper after the events of last February disrupted the normal selection procedure.

He feels he has an obligation to all of his readers because of their financial support.

"As far as I'm concerned the gumchewing sportsfan is as much entitled to a good sports page as the social scientist is to a good feature article on Little Burgundy. So we're going to tackle both and try to please all our readers. I'm going to try and make this paper an effective agent of information and reform," McCormick said.

"The university has undergone a re-definition in the sixties and most people seem to act as if they're unaware of the transformation. And I think most of the blame lies with the student journalist. Newspapers have been too parochial in their approach and editors have been too irresponsible journalistically. They seem to have replaced a commitment to the basic principles of journalism, which I happen to think is very important, with a vague commitment to some ill-conceived ideology.

"I want *the georgian* to broaden its coverage. I think of the student as people and I want to follow him around in his day to see what he does and where he goes outside the university. I want to find out what issues and problems touch him and affect his life and his way of thinking. So in our first issue we dealt with the student ghetto of Montreal and how the Cité Concordia project will affect the residents of that area."

Wayne S. Gray is the editor-in-chief and publisher of *The Paper* which claims to be Canada's largest evening student weekly. He is an evening student and, in case you haven't heard, was instrumental in challenging *the georgian's* monopoly of the print medium on campus.

The Paper was formed last year by the Evening Students Association to act as their communication organ. And in its short period of existence it has undergone many changes. From a publication of amateurish presentation and poor quality, *The Paper* has been greatly improved to the point of developing its own very unique tabloid style. Gray and his associates feel that *the georgian's* abdication of responsibility led to their successful challenge of the authoritative position it formerly occupied on campus.

But *The Paper* and Wayne Gray are not content to stop there.

This year, Gray has negotiated contracts with the evening student associations of Sir George and Loyola to publish *The Paper* to serve both campuses. Twenty-five issues will be published throughout the academic year with both associations sharing the bill and contributing to *The Paper's* budget. A projection of this year's combined circulation runs close to the 25,000 mark.

There will be two campus editors working under Gray: Mona Forrest at Sir George and Mark Herscovitch at Loyola.

"I see *The Paper* as a vehicle for the awareness and involvement of evening students. We have filled the major communications role at Sir George due to the dismal performance of the other media. This year we'll be extending our coverage to all facets of student, administration and faculty relations while continuing to employ the highest journalistic standards. And that's because we've been able to attract the best writing and administrative talent in the school because we can afford to pay them!

"I think *The Paper's* major contribution has been the elimination of bias from reporting... also our attitude is very important... we've been dealing with people and not the structures in the university," said Gray.

Andrew Crighton, executive producer of Television Sir George, plans to inject an element of freedom in the running of Canada's only student owned and operated television station.

Crighton would like to develop TVSG into a resource center for all students. He feels the mass media, especially television, can play a vital role in the learning process by supplementing courses and by lessening the academic dependence on the written word.

As a communication and information medium, he hopes TVSG will contribute to the students awareness of important issues and events.

"I get very excited about the potential of television in the university. It's such a dynamic medium. It combines a sense of intensity with immediacy. We'd like to get all students involved in our operations somehow. Anybody who is interested in the television medium or has program ideas should come down and see us and talk, things over with one of our staff advisors," stated Crighton.

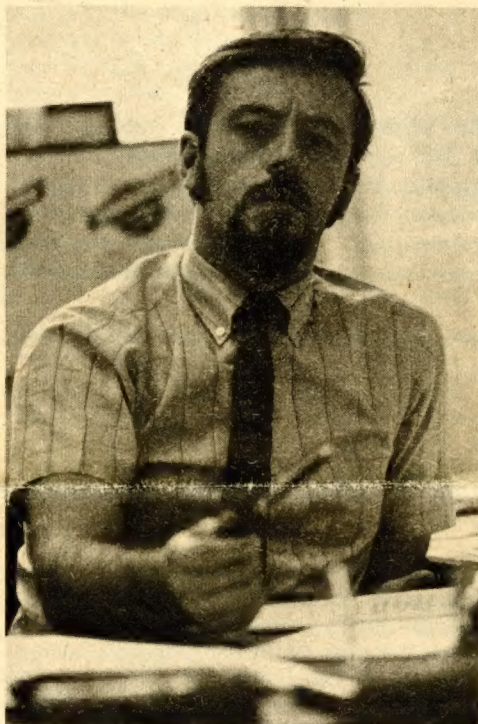
In addition to programs on the University's own channel, TVSG will telecast a number of shows over Cable TV's closed circuit channel 9. The use of Cable TV's facilities this year will give students an opportunity to work with colour television.

External programming over the summer has included interviews with John Lennon and Robert Charlebois and a feature program of the Snoopies flying club. Plans for internal programming this year include a program devoted to the underground press and a program series on the occult.

Crighton promises more actuality film with all productions because of the acquisition of a telecine chain. He feels that the use of film will take people outside the confines of the TVSG studios.



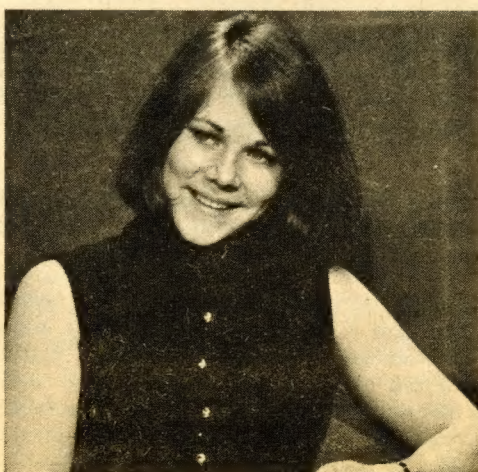
Joel McCormick



Wayne Gray



Andrew Crighton



Dona Cockerton

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SGWU ISSUES & EVENTS

The University has re-shaped its Communications Committee to better reflect the diverse attitudes of the community at Sir George.

The committee will now deal with all forms of internal and external communications.

Michael Sheldon, assistant to the Principal, will chair the committee sessions which begin in September.

The faculty is represented on the committee by professors Michael Brian, James Dick, Gerry Mahoney and Roland Wills. Brian Selwood, development officer, André Laprade, assistant vice-principal (administration and finance) and Malcolm Stone, information officer, will also sit on the committee.

Appointments to the committee have also been made by the Students Association, the Evening Students Association, the Office of the Dean of Students and the Center for Instructional Technology.

Mr. Sheldon said the committee would study carefully the attitudes of the outside community toward Sir George.

(Turn to back page)

neil compton on communications

Neil Compton has lectured at Sir George for eighteen years. From 1952 to 1969, he was chairman of the English department. He has written many essays and articles on the influence and state of popular culture. Mr. Compton is a regular contributor to such publications as *Canadian Forum*, *Canadian Dimension*, and *Commentary*. This year he will give a new course entitled, "Popular Culture and Mass Media." In addition to his teaching duties, he is president of the Sir George Williams Association of University Teachers.



Issues & Events: Communications is a very vague type of word, it's been over used quite recently. Do you think it has any meaning anymore, especially in the context of the University?

Compton: Well, it certainly ought to have meaning because it's a process which simply has to be carried on. I think what you're really saying is that communication is much more difficult than it was, and that is presumably because for two parties to communicate they must share certain common expectations. I think the difficulty really, in the University today, is that there are different sets of expectations. Obviously some major watershed of human history is being passed which makes it so unusually difficult to speak across the gulf.

Why do you think this problem of communications arose?

Well, there are all sorts of glib answers, and they are probably all true. For one thing I think that most people over a certain age were reared in a society based on scarcity and we live in a different world where today our problem is over-production. Distribution is the problem. I have several teenage kids. One of their great problems is boredom. You would expect that would be the last problem of a young person today. They are bored because there doesn't seem to be any reason for indulging in a kind of activity that we used to do. We continue to talk to the young as though the old situation still applies.

Is the University providing the motivation? Obviously it should be, is it?

Yes, I would like to say that. But it isn't. And you are right when you say the University should be. It makes me feel a little bitter when people talk about what the University should do. Everybody I think can tell what the University should not do, but I don't think that anybody knows what the University should do. The students complain about the courses they have now. But there are proposals for alternate courses. If we were to put them into effect they would riot against them the following year. They don't know. We all know there is something wrong, but we don't know what to do. In this situation everybody who has a birthright thinks he is entitled to be stimulated all the time you know, turned on by every lecture. When it doesn't happen, they feel bitter. Then, this is another expectation. I grew up expecting some things would be difficult. The food in the cafeteria wouldn't always be delicious every time you had it. But this is now an outrage. If the coffee stinks, it's not merely "damn it" but it's "fire the manager". Well that's going a bit far.

Is there not enough tolerance?

I think it's perhaps the television commercial mentality: there is a simple solution for every dilemma, a girl friend won't walk with you, use Ban, and the next thing you know, you are married. Well, O.K., the cafeteria food is lousy, fire the manager and get a new guy, then everything will get better. I think there is something in this theory.

Do you think that part of the problem could be that people of opposing views and opposing interests aren't interested in communicating and in bridging the gap?

Yes, I think so. I have been giving something of a faculty view now. I want to suggest that students are what they are and if anybody made them what they are, their elders did. It's like Frankenstein creating his own monster, therefore he is responsible for it. Academics have an endless capacity for self-delusion. For centuries on this continent the big problem was academic freedom. Because everywhere obscurantist Board of Governors cracked down on radical professors and fired them, and they and their families had to starve for, say, good principle. This does still happen in Alabama and in east Mississip-

pi but in no major university today is this a serious problem. And yet the faculty continues to act as though it were and they strongly resist the slightest infringement on what they consider to be their freedom. Much of the obloquy that is heaped on the University administration I think really belongs on the faculty. Because the faculty for better or worse is in the driving seat. They set the standards, they are not slow to tell the administration what to do, they are rightly quick to resist any infringement on their power.

You are the president of SGWAUT for this year; what is the faculty going to do this year to facilitate communication with students?

As president of SGWAUT I should say that I think it's very difficult for a professional association to play a role because our main task is after all to defend the rights of our members. The difficult thing for the president of such an association is to know where the legitimate exercise of this ends and obstruction begins. You know it's often said that the faculty association should also act in a positive way by proposing various forms of various kinds. But in fact as you may know the basic planning for the Hall Building was carried out by John O'Brien, Jack Bordan and some other people when they were members of SGWAUT. But today the place is so big and planning is so complex that I don't think the faculty association can do that today. But I think the ideas should come from the various governing bodies in the University. And students should press for what they want, too.

It's been said that one of the weaknesses in the University that was revealed last February is that there is a lack of official channels of communication. Do you think that's true and if it is, has anything been done to open up channels?

Yes, I think that it was true and of course the foundation of a paper such as this is one of the means to open them up. I don't know how you communicate to such a great mass. They are called apathetic students and they are apathetic partly because they are not communicating with professors. The reason why they are not communicating with us is because they are apathetic. How do you communicate? Do people really want to communicate? And I think that perhaps a great many students don't really want it very much and a good many faculty members too, I suppose.

We are seeing now the entrance into University of people who are the first T.V. generation. They have been completely brought up in homes with television. What effect does this have on the University, here?

There is a great temptation to believe that it has had a great effect because of children watching highly sophisticated programs at the age of two or three before they can even speak properly. Obviously this must have quite an effect on their psyche. There is the whole concept about learning through total involvement rather than the linear visual method. Television is marvellous for conveying events, action, processes, games, when I say games I don't mean only football but student rioting as a kind of a game or more as a kind of a game as T.V. sees it. What television can't do is convey knowledge. It shows Viet Nam every night, but they all look the same, you don't know which side is which, what they are fighting about, where they come from. Television never suggests that. It's not that television should suggest and doesn't, but television can't suggest difficult, complex abstract processes. I can't help thinking that this is one reason for the tremendous impatience. I come back to this as an adult looking at all the kids refusing to recognize the complexity of life generally, including the life of the University: the demand for instant solutions. And in a way this is good. Adults have tolerated injustice and made nothing about it for years; that's a legitimate charge. On the other hand, it's just as bad to think that things must be changed tomorrow. One thing television has done is to make us more aware of abusiveness. It was one thing to read about riots in the paper and another to see them on television.



The students seem to have learned how to use television for their own purposes, what about the University? Can the University use television?

First of all I think television is dangerously subversive. You know, I thought when you saw the black students being interviewed on Hourglass, Znamer gave the white students a hard time because they wouldn't appear at the same time with the blacks. I thought their answer was quite right that if they got into a fight it wouldn't contribute anything to the viewers' knowledge. They couldn't have been frank in what they said and the blacks had nothing to lose, they could say anything.

But surely television is not, well maybe you will dispute this, but I don't think television is there to impart knowledge so much as to impart an impression and there it would have been legitimate to have a confrontation not for the knowledge from the confrontation but for a sort of impression.

As it happened, I tried to see with the eyes of somebody who knew nothing about the events and it seemed to me that the evasiveness of Douglas and Johns didn't do them any good whereas the whites answered much more frankly and logically. Yes, you are quite right, television does nothing much except show a kind of style. But then who has more style than those black students. They absolutely radiate T.V. style, don't they? And, let's face it, I don't and God knows John O'Brien doesn't, you know. Then you have to face these people, you have to cope with them. But how can you with a man like Chet Davis? Chet Davis is so charming and vital and articulate, it's terrifying. And yet I think he was so wrong and this is my opinion on this subject, and yet there is no doubt he was right on television.

Do you think the young people, students, have a sort of innate television presence? They just fit in?

You have to be young because your skin is tighter over the bones and you've got all your hair and that sort of thing, but I think some old guys, Bertrand Russell and others are terrific on television. It pays to be thin and to be hungry looking, I think.

Do you think there is a serious problem with communications at Sir George?

Yes, I think there is a serious problem. In all institutions where generations have to talk. There's a serious problem right in my family and I have a pretty good relation with most of my kids, but yet we don't communicate. I think it's pretty general and whether we tend to exaggerate it today because we are so super-conscious of situations, I don't know, maybe it's always been notorious that age and youth don't go well together. I think there's plenty of reasons to believe that this is something rather special.

Well, what can we do to resolve it?

Well, I think we simply have to try to understand it, as much as possible. Let me give you an example: Years ago before I had polio, I gave English 221, the big survey course, Chaucer to the modern day writers but then I let off for a number of years because it was difficult. I was busy with the department and so on, and then finally two or three years ago I went back to the Evening Division and I found that it wasn't too difficult to do, and gave them very much the same course as I gave them ten years earlier, and it went down you know, not too bad. And then last year I got stuck. I had to offer it in the day. And that really was a shock. I had a class just the same size, H-110, as in the evening but they were all five, six, seven years younger. First of all, they couldn't stand being

in a big hall. The evening students didn't like it but didn't mind it too much. The youngsters couldn't stand that, just to be there irritated them. And then I found that all the reactions I had counted on, you know, to specific parts, which had been tried and true for years, simply didn't work, and you build your lecture on the idea that when you say this, the response is going to be that, and then you go on to some other thing. But here everything was vice versa, you see, and particularly T.S. Eliot's Prufrock. At one time every kid immediately understood this kind of typical modern hang-up, but the idea of anybody being so prudish, uptight, nervous, defeatist, anti-sex well, it's so absurd. I am not going to give the course this year but if I were it sure would be very different in my lectures.

Can you think of any incidents of a breakdown in communications?

I've been chairman of the English department about 17 years and brought in most of the people in the department. I always thought that I could tell what the reactions of the department would be to any development, so I could make my plans accordingly. They would get furious about that, they wouldn't accept this. During the last three years I seem to almost have totally lost this knack. I don't think it's me getting older, I think it's a combination of factors. First of all the younger faculty members, of course, are more and more like the students themselves and tend to respond accordingly. Such as during the tension we've had recently. Secondly there appears to be a critical size in the organization. We were about 20 people in the English department, we didn't like each other entirely, we fought a good deal. But it was always quite personal, I mean in other words, we worked together as an organism and when we were mad at each other, there was a personal relation and a human sort of warm madness or love, whichever it was. Now we have about 35 people, we don't know each other very well, and so relations have tended to be very abstract and factionalized, and it's much less pleasant than it was. Now here we are with a mass university made up of dozens of little cells like this, I mean a hundred of them. Now what do you do about that? The faculty may have a critical size and in this institution we may have passed it.

Do you think that people are aware that they operate on different levels of reality?

Yes, I think so. I've been astounded, during the last year, at the lack of imagination of people in every part of the University: faculty, students, administration, but people who would always seem to be extremely rational, men of good will, you suddenly discover that there are whole gaps in their personality, but you don't know this unless the situation gets out of hand. What you do about that, I don't know. Then the University, of course, is such a vulnerable institution in that it has to be free, it has to tolerate these things or else it isn't a university. I wish I had a panacea.

I just want to quote from this article you wrote in the Canadian Forum about the events at Sir George earlier in the year. And you pose two questions. Has the open liberal University a future in the face of many enemies which threaten both within and without, and can a structure such as the Hall Building continue to be the setting for such an institution like this. How do you answer these questions?

Well, I finished that article with the questions having no answers and a lot of people felt that I was rather chicken, that I should have but I really didn't know. Particularly when I wrote that article, very soon after the events I was very reluctant to come out with any kind of dogmatic statement. I hope that in Canada, that in Montreal, we can manage to do it but I was very struck that when we were interviewing candidates for the principalship, last year, we had a couple of people from big urban American universities. What struck them most about Sir George was that it was in the downtown area, which is where people live and play and have fun, whereas back home in Detroit and other American cities similar places to Sir George were open from 8 to 6 and after that you can have no evening classes, because nobody can dare move around and the poor place is given over to thugs and so on.

What would you be bringing to people's attention that hasn't been brought to their attention?

I think much more open controversy. What I think was a terrible failure was the *georgian* in the last two years. Not that the editors were very radical. We want the editors of student papers to be subversive and radical. But what was disappointing about the paper I thought was that there was so little real argument in it. It was all partly because the people are too lazy to write and the editors wanted contributions and couldn't get them.

What is your opinion of The Paper and of television as it was used last year?

About television, I saw nothing of it so maybe that's a criticism of it. *The Paper* was usually denounced as a fascist rag. I didn't think it was quite so illiberal as others did but certainly it had its moments of obscurantism.

dial 879-4545

879-4545 is the centralized telephone service now operating for feeding information to the electronic bulletin board of University Channel 9.

Faculty can now phone in information regarding departmental events, and outside events of academic interest, for daily TV posting. Callers should identify themselves, and their department, telling the receptionist (or recording device) what is happening, the sponsoring body, date, time and place, and charge, if any.

Students can make use of the service through SA and ESA offices.

Calls can be made anytime from inside or outside; information received during regular hours can be posted within the hour. From 8:30 to 10:30 p.m. TV monitors through the Hall and Norris Buildings will carry immediate and comprehensive rotating listing of University events.

Class cancellations, also to be posted, should continue to be called in to the Assistant Vice-Principal, Academic. CJAD will announce evening class cancellations at 1.45 p.m.

THE WEEK AT SGWU

MONDAY 15

GALLERY I: "Design 490," a student exhibit of advanced multi-media work, through September 18.

EVENING STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION: Orientation Week through September 19, mezzanine of the Hall Building, 5 to 9:30 p.m.

THURSDAY 18

TUESDAY 16

FRIDAY 19

This page will list all University events. Send notices and photos of coming events to the Information Office, Room 211 of the Norris Building, or phone 879-2867. Deadline for submission is noon Monday for the following week's events.

WEDNESDAY 17

GALLERY II: Works of graduate student Mrs. Girnith Stewart.

UNIVERSITY COUNCIL ON STUDENT LIFE: Meeting in H-769, 5 to 8:30 p.m.
COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE: Meeting in H-762, 5:30 p.m.

SATURDAY 20

STATEMENT BY THE PRINCIPAL

The Code of Student Behaviour for Sir George Williams University was issued on June 16 after it had been approved by the Board of Governors. To ensure acknowledgement of the Code on its introduction, the University included a direct reference to it in the student contract for the 1969-70 academic year.

After consultation with the student associations, it has been decided that direct reference to the Code in the student contract will not be required in future years. The Code of Student Behaviour is part of the rules and regulations of the University. Accordingly there is no further need to draw attention to it.

J.W. O'Brien
Principal and Vice-Chancellor

September 9, 1969

(from page one)

A series of twenty-eight weekly television programs will be produced by the Information Office for telecast over the closed circuit channel in the university.

The purpose of the series "Can you all hear at the back?" is to create a sense of involvement and to encourage dialogue among all members of the university community.

Dona Cockerton, a third year English student, has been preparing programs over the summer and will act as the series' hostess. She is quite hopeful of developing a sense of awareness and of community at Sir George.

"In the present university setting, people just don't have a chance to talk anymore. I think these programs will let people get to know each other a little better... I find the current polarization of thought on North American campuses deplorable. Militancy isn't the only solution to student problems. We intend to bring issues and problems to the attention of the university in the hope that they can then be resolved in a reasonable and responsible fashion."

One of the first programs in the series will consider the problems students face at registration. Students will air their grievances about the procedure and then Registrar Ken Adams will be invited to respond. Other programs will deal with the new Code of Student Behaviour, the financial structure of the university and the Summer Festival of Arts.

"Can you all hear at the back?" will be ten minutes long. Each program in the series will be telecast several times weekly. Television monitors are located throughout the Hall Building and are being installed in the Norris Building.

SGWU ISSUES & EVENTS

SGWU ISSUES & EVENTS is published weekly by the Information Office of Sir George Williams University, Montreal. The Editorial Offices are located in Room 211 of the Norris Building, 1435 Drummond Street, Montreal 107, Quebec. Telephone 879-2867.

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